



**MINUTE SUMMARY**  
**Edina Planning Commission**  
**November 25, 2008, 7:00 PM**  
**Edina City Hall Council Chambers**  
**4801 50<sup>th</sup> Street West**

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**Members Present:**

**Chair Lonsbury, Julie Risser, Nancy Scherer, Kevin Staunton, Michael Schroeder, Mike Fischer, Steve Brown, Floyd Grabel, Arlene Forrest and Patrick Schnettler**

**Staff Present:**

**Cary Teague, Jackie Hoogenakker**

**I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTE SUMMARY:**

The minutes of the October 29, 2008, meeting were filed as submitted.

**II. NEW BUSINESS:**

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<b>2008.0017.08</b>	<b>Rezoning, Final Development Plan, Lot Division/Final Plat and Variances Ebenezer Society/7500 York Cooperative 7500 York Avenue</b>
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**Planner Presentation**

Planner Teague informed the Commission the Ebenezer Society, on behalf of the 7500 York Cooperative are proposing to build a 76-unit, 4-story addition to the northwest side of the existing 337-unit, 9-story senior housing development at 7500 York Avenue. Of the 76 units, 47 units would be for assisted living, 16 would be of memory care and 13 elder care suites. Access to the site would be off Edinborough Way and Parklawn Avenue. Parking would be provided underground, and within a small surface lot off Parklawn Avenue.

Planner Teague explained the proposal before the Planning Commission is a Preliminary Development Plan and Preliminary Rezoning, and ultimately, the proposal would require all of the following:

1. Final Rezoning from PRD-4, Planned Residential District to PSR-4, to Planned Senior Development District.
2. Final Development Plan.

3. Variances. A maximum square footage variance for 14 dwelling units. A 3-foot setback variance from Edinborough Way.
4. Lot Division/Final Plat. The site exists as two lots today. The lot lines would be shifted to accommodate the new building.

Planner Teague continued and asked the Commission to note in order to obtain the above-mentioned approvals, the applicant must go through a two-step process. That process is as follows:

1. Preliminary Development Plan and Rezoning. Preliminary Development Plan and Rezoning is a review by the Planning Commission and City Council, in which approval simply allows the applicant to prepare a Final Development Plan. Approval of the Preliminary Development Plan requires a three-fifths vote of the City Council, but does not guarantee approval of the Rezoning, or Final Development Plan.
2. Final Development Plan and Rezoning. The Final Development Plan process is generally the same as the Preliminary Development Plan. A three-fifths favorable vote of the City Council is again required.

Planner Teague concluded staff recommends approval based on the following findings:

1. The proposed addition is consistent with the multiple family housing developments to the north, south, east and west.
2. The proposed density is compatible with densities in the area.
3. Given the City of Edina's aging population, senior housing is a need in the City.
4. The existing roadways would support the proposed project.

Approval is also subject to the following Conditions:

1. The Final Development Plan must be generally consistent with approved Preliminary Development Plans dated June 30, 2008.
2. Sustainable design. Final Development Plans must include the Sustainable Initiatives as outlined in the applicant's narrative on pages A5a–A5c of the staff report.
3. Compliance with the conditions outlined in the city engineer's memo dated September 24, 2008.

### **Appearing for Applicant**

Mark Thomas, Ebenezer, Russ Helgeson, 7500 York Avenue resident, Ward Isaacson, Pope Architects, and Charles Bassford, Notary Public.

### **Commission Comments/Questions**

Commissioner Grabiell questioned the reasoning behind the "cap" for allowed unit square footage in the PSR zoning district. Planner Teague responded the "cap" on square footage is to ensure affordable housing.

## **Applicant Presentation**

Mr. Thomas addressed the Commission and explained the history of Ebenezer Society and their outreach into the community. Mr. Thomas said Ebenezer currently serves 3,000 seniors and the 7500 York Co-op has a waiting list of up to 10 years. The average age at 7500 York is 84 years.

Russ Helgeson told the Commission as a resident of 7500 York he has had to watch many of his friends leave their home at 7500 York when the need arose to transition to an assisted living facility, adding if this request is approved that would no longer be an issue. Mr. Helgeson said in his opinion if approved this proposal would be a benefit, not only for residents of 7500 York, but to the community at large. Continuing, Mr. Helgeson said the new building and additional landscaping will actually enhance the property. Mr. Helgeson asked the Commission to also note that many people who are interested in being placed on the wait list for 7500 York also ask if an assisted living component is offered. Concluding, Mr. Helgeson noted if this request were approved 7500 York would be more competitive.

Mr. Isaacson presented to the Commission a slide show highlighting features of the proposed building. He explained that Ebenezer/7500 York Co-Op is proposing to construct 76 new units with a breakdown of 47 assisted living units, 16 memory care units and 13 elder care suites. Mr. Isaacson noted 7500 York is the first co-op in the State requesting approval to create a continuum of care for seniors in a cooperative housing setting.

## **Commission Comments**

Commissioners referred to letters received from residents expressing concern over loss of green space (if this project were approved) and obstructed views. Correspondence also noted if surface parking were reduced more green space could be retained.

Commissioners raised the following issues:

- Will the new assisted living facility be part of the 7500 Co-Op
- Will residents at 7500 York receive preferential treatment if the need arises for a resident to move into assisted living quarters
- Who advanced this request

Mr. Helgeson responded that the proposed assisted living building would function independently from the 7500 Co-Op. Mr. Helgeson stated at this time details are still being worked out on the flow between buildings, land lease, legal description, etc.

Mr. Bassford explained Ebenezer Society has requested an overall development plan to construct an assisted living facility at 7500 York. 7500 York residents would have to vote on the request. At this time the land use designation for 7500 York is PRD, and a rezoning of the entire site to PSR is also being requested by

the Board at 7500 York. Mr. Bassford stated in discussions with city staff a PSR zoning was found to be more compatible with the use of this site as a senior building and if approved, assisted living building. The rezoning would also bring the parking requirements into conformance with city code. Concluding, Mr. Bassford pointed out if rezoned a maximum unit square footage variance would be required.

### **Public Comment**

Bruce Holman, 7240 Edinborough Way pointed out that this proposal also impacts nearby Edina residents that don't reside at 7500 York. Mr. Holman said in his opinion the proposed building is set too close to Edinborough Way. Mr. Holman said he is also concerned about his view being blocked and construction noise. Concluding, Mr. Holman asked the Commission to keep in mind that the YMCA is also interested in constructing residential units on its site, adding the increased density in the immediate area is getting to be too much.

Bob Jarvis, 7500 York Avenue #117 told the Commission he is in favor of the proposal as submitted. He told the Commission the average age of residents in the 7500 building is 84 years old, adding if approved, the proposed assisted living component would keep 7500 viable, and the next step many present 7500 residents could use.

Mark Johnson, 7500 York Avenue #438, stated he moved to 7500 York a year ago and disagrees with the proposal presented this evening. Mr. Johnson said many 7500 residents will not speak up, but he knows many residents are worried about the noise this will generate, loss of green space and obstructed views. Mr. Johnson said he would like to see the age of residents permitted to "buy" into 7500 York lowered.

Gemma Hessian, 7500 York Avenue, told the Commission she recently fell and realized how quickly things could change, adding if the assisted living component was part of the 7500 community she could recuperate and have physical therapy without leaving her community. Miss Hessian stated she supports the proposal as presented.

Rob Grauman, Fairview Southdale Hospital told the Commission he supports the project. He added it is important to be able to transition from one type of housing into another as easily as possible.

**Commissioner Grabiell moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.**

### **Commission Comments**

A discussion ensued with Commissioners indicating that on the whole they support the project as presented. Commissioners acknowledged the Zoning Board will act on the variances requested; with Commissioners indicating their support for those variances.

### **Commission Action**

**Commissioner Grabiell moved to recommend Preliminary Rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan approval with variances based on staff findings and subject to staff conditions. Commissioner Scherer seconded the motion. Aye's; Risser, Scherer, Staunton, Schroeder, Fischer, Brown, Grabiell, Forrest. Abstain: Lonsbury. Motion carried.**

### **Further Commission Discussion**

Commissioners indicated that in the future they would like further discussion (at the Commission level) on amending the Zoning Ordinance's "unit square footage requirements" in the PSR district.

Commissioners also asked the proponent to reconsider adding a green roof, pointing out it may not be as difficult or as expensive as first thought.

Commissioners also requested that if approved at the Council level that the builder be respectful to all neighbors during the construction phase.

### **III. INTERGOVERNMENTAL BUSINESS:**

Chair Lonsbury acknowledged the "back of the packet" materials.

Commissioner Brown informed the Commission the next SAC meeting is December 15<sup>th</sup>, and will be at Braemar Golf Course, not Christ Presbyterian.

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No additional public comment.

### **V. ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Risser adjourned the meeting at 8:55 PM

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Submitted by